

FINELINE

A Division of Finance monthly communication service

May 2004

Policy Changes Go Into Effect July 1

Travel Advances

The policy for travel advances, FIACCT 10-02.01, Travel – Advances, has always allowed an advance to cover 90% of anticipated meals and incidental costs. However, because an advance for lodging was not addressed in policy, agencies have handled it in a variety of ways.

The policy will be modified to allow travel advances for 90% of anticipated lodging costs when the employee travels fewer than three times per year on state business and does not have a corporate credit card. It is recommended that an employee traveling more than three times per year have a corporate credit card and use it to pay travel costs, including lodging. The corporate card is not mandatory, but the employee traveling more than three times per year is not eligible for a cash advance. Any exception to this policy must be approved in writing by the department director or his designee.



It is standard industry practice for hotels/motels to require a deposit (around \$50) from cash-paying customers to cover charges over and above the room cost, e.g., telephone or room service. This inconvenience is avoided by paying with a credit card. Audits of travel advances have identified that some employees are receiving a cash advance for lodging costs and then actually paying for the room with a credit card. This practice defeats the objectives of the credit card program. These objectives include employee convenience, reduced need for travel advance cash funds, and reduced time spent reconciling advances to reimbursements.

A cash advance **is not allowed** for car rental because car rental companies will not accept cash payments.

Private Vehicle Usage Rates

Effective July 1, 2004, the private vehicle reimbursement rate if a state vehicle **is available** will increase from 30 cents to 32 cents. The reimbursement rate if a state vehicle **is not available** will increase from 36 cents to 37.5 cents. The mileage rate for relocation reimbursements will increase from 12 cents to 14 cents. The mileage rate used to compare driving versus flying will increase from 30 cents to 32 cents. These increases are in line with rates established by the Internal Revenue Services.

Mass Transit Expense Reimbursement

The ceiling for optional mass transit expense reimbursement will move from \$65 to \$100 per month to match IRS allowances.

Article continues on page 3

Yearend Accounting Meeting, Training Set for June 22

The annual fiscal yearend Budget and Accounting Officers meeting will be held at 8:30 a.m. on June 22 at the Utah State Library, 250 North 1950 West. This meeting will review yearend closing and changes for the new year.

In conjunction with the meeting, the Division of Finance will offer fiscal yearend accounting training, also on June 22. Training on the *Closeout Process*, *Yearend Revenue Accounting*, and *Yearend Expenditure Accounting* is intended for those who have not previously gone through the fiscal yearend closing process. Those who need a refresher course are also welcome to attend. The *Fixed Assets* training will provide an overview of selected Fixed Asset procedures.

Training will also be offered Wednesday, June 23 in the **State Office Building Room 2108** for those who cannot attend June 22. Times for the classes are:



June 22 **Utah State Library, 250 North 1950 West**

10:30 a.m. – noon Fixed Assets

This course will cover purchasing fixed assets, recording depreciation, asset disposals, trade-ins, donated assets, and gains and losses. It will also cover revenue and expenditure reports and the fixed asset tables and ledgers available on Cognos. This training is intended for those who have some experience with fixed assets or have already taken the on-line Fixed Assets training.

10:30 – 11:15 a.m. Closeout Schedules and Closing Process

This course will cover the closing schedule and budget closing issues. It is intended for those responsible for yearend closing and reporting.

1:00 – 2:15 p.m. Yearend Revenue Accounting

This course will cover the yearend process for cash receipts cutoff, accounts receivable, deferred revenue, and inter-agency billings. It is intended for staff responsible for cash receipts and revenue accounting.

2:30 – 3:30 p.m. Yearend Expenditure Accounting

This course will cover purchasing transactions, petty cash cutoff, accrued expenditures, prepaid expenditures, and inter-agency transactions. It is intended for those who process purchasing transactions, and for those who pay bills and are responsible for expenditure accounting.

June 23 **State Office Building, Room 2108**

8:30 – 9:15 a.m. Closeout Schedules and Closing Process

9:15 – 10:30 a.m. Yearend Revenue Accounting

10:45 – 11:45 a.m. Yearend Expenditure Accounting

1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Fixed Assets

To reserve a spot in a class for either June 22 or June 23, call 801-538-3082. Space for the June 23 sessions is limited, so it is **very important to make reservations for training** ahead of time. ❖

Deadlines for FY 05 Budgets, Chart of Accounts Setup

Listed below are selected agency deadlines for the setup of fiscal 2005 budget and the new year chart of accounts. See the calendars distributed at the Budget and Accounting Officers meeting for a complete list of setup dates. The calendar is available on the Division of Finance Web site at www.finance.utah.gov/publications/bameetings.htm.

April 30 Final FY 04 restricted revenue budgets are due. Agencies update their restricted general and restricted special revenue fund revenue budgets with RB documents on-line in FINET.

April 30 Submit January, February, and March Trust and Agency Bank reconciliations to Deborah Memmott.

May 3 Complete all changes on-line for activity, reporting category, project/job entries, and for FAIT.

May 5 Using FINET or Data Warehouse queries, review the setup of 2005 budget and new year chart of accounts for NEW year appropriation, revenue, and expense budgets loaded to FINET. Also review activity, reporting category, project/job, and FAIT tables.

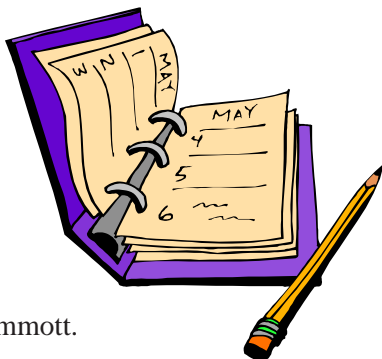
May 19 Begin cleanup of standard POs in preparation for yearend. Finance will close all outstanding OLD year POs on August 27.

May 20 Complete Coding Block Change Table (CBCT) entries on-line.

May 28 Confirmation letter due to Dave Byg stating that your Fixed Asset Physical Inventory is completed.

The original budget flag will be set in June. After it is set, any budget changes will show on budget tables in the *Modified Budget Amount*. State Finance will notify agencies through the FINET list server when the budget flag has been set.

If you have questions about the deadlines, contact Marcie Handy at 801-537-9081 or mhandy@utah.gov. ❖



These Policies Change July 1 (article continues from page 1)

Lodging Reimbursement

Layton will now be included with Ogden, Provo, and Orem in the exception to the standard \$55 plus tax lodging reimbursement. Employees will be reimbursed \$63 plus tax for lodging in these four cities. The new convention center scheduled to open in Layton this summer will honor this increased lodging per diem.

Policies Available on the Web

All Division of Finance policies are available at www.finance.utah.gov. Click on *Publications, Accounting Policies and Procedures*. Then either expand the hierarchy or do a word search to locate the policy of interest. These updated policies will be available July 1. If you have any questions, please contact Carol Young at 801-538-3100 or cyoung@utah.gov. ❖

Follow Policy If You Choose to Drive Instead of Fly

As summer approaches, more travelers will choose to drive on business rather than fly. We want to remind everyone of the policies pertaining to driving a private vehicle rather than flying.

The complete state accounting policy, FIACCT 10-02.06, Travel – Reimbursements – Transportation, is available on the Finance Web site at www.finance.utah.gov.

Click on *Publications, Accounting Policies and Procedures*. Then either expand the hierarchy or do a word search to locate this policy.



Below are some details of the policy:

- The department director must approve the request to drive rather than fly, using Form FI 5, Request for Out of State Travel Authorization.
- The traveler will be reimbursed 30 cents per mile or the airline fare, whichever is less. (The mileage reimbursement rate will change to 32 cents per mile on July 1.) The airline fare is based on the lowest rate available for a 15 to 30 day advance reservation.
- The traveler may be reimbursed for meals and lodging for a reasonable amount of time; however, the total cost of the trip must not exceed the equivalent cost of the airline trip.
- Items such as parking, toll fees, etc. are included in the mileage rate and **will not** be reimbursed.
- Travelers should contact the State Travel Office to obtain a comparison of the cost of airfare vs mileage. This is **required documentation** when the traveler chooses to drive rather than fly and must be attached to the traveler's reimbursement request.
- If travel time taken for driving during the employee's normal work week is greater than that which would have occurred had the employee flown, the excess time used will be taken as annual leave and deducted on the Payroll System. ❖

ACT Meeting Handouts Are Now on the Finance Web Site

Handouts from the ACT (Accounting Coordinating Team) meetings are now being posted to the Division of Finance Web site at www.finance.utah.gov/publications/actmeetings.htm.

The handouts are Rich Text Format (.rtf) files that can be opened in any word processor. The handouts will be posted as soon as possible after each ACT meeting. We plan to archive one year's worth of handouts on the Web site.

In addition, handouts from the Budget and Accounting Officers meetings are now available at www.finance.utah.gov/publications/bameetings.htm. ❖



InForms Versions of Finance Forms Are Now Obsolete

Agencies, please be aware that your employees should not be using any InForms versions of forms released by the Division of Finance. These electronic forms are not current versions and are now obsolete. To insure that these outdated forms are not being used, we have requested that agency LAN administrators remove InForms from their systems by May 1.



Agency personnel should now be using the PDF versions of our electronic forms available on the Finance Web site at www.finance.utah.gov/forms. These eForms, which work best with Adobe Acrobat Reader 6.01, are the most current versions of the forms. To download Acrobat Reader 6.01, go to our Web site at www.finance.utah.gov/downloads and select *EFORMS* on the left.

We have begun the process to tie the PDF forms to the eForms database and hope to convert the 100 remaining forms by the end of 2004.

If you have questions about using the forms on our Web site, call the FINET Help Desk at 801-538-9690. ❖

Frequently Asked Question from FINET Help Desk

Q I am trying to view and print the FINET reports from the FINET Reports icon. The reports don't look like they used to, and they are very hard to see. Even if I print the page, it is still not easy to see. Why is this happening?

A The FINET reports available through the icon have been reformatted to work on the Internet, where they will be available sometime in the near future. The defaults are set up to accommodate the Web printing problems (as of period 9). To be able to more easily view and print the reports, follow the instructions below:



- If you are looking at the report and cannot read the print, do the following:
 - ✓ Click on the **Print** icon.
 - ✓ Click on **Tools**.
 - ✓ Click on the box in front of *Disable Overlay* to remove the check mark.
- If you want to print the report, do the following:
 - ✓ Click on the **Print** icon.
 - ✓ Click on the **Options** tab.
 - ✓ Under Advanced, remove the check mark from *Use Forms Overlay*.
 - ✓ Click **OK**.

Be certain you are set up to print Landscape instead of Portrait before running the report. ❖

May Calendar

FINET Schedule

- May 7** FINET open; April monthend
May 31 FINET closed; Memorial Day holiday
June 1 FINET open; Tuesday cycle due to holiday



Payroll Training

Computer-based training on the Payroll System is available on the Finance Web site at www.finance.utah.gov/training/courses.htm.

Data Warehouse Training

- May 11** Data Warehouse – Payroll; 10 – 11:30 a.m.
May 11 Data Warehouse – FINET; 1:30 – 3 p.m.

FINET Classroom Training

- May 25** Internal Transactions Lab; 8:30 – 11:30 a.m.
May 25 Fixed Assets Lab; 1 – 4 p.m.
May 26 Purchasing Lab; 8:30 – 11:30 a.m.
May 26 Disbursing Lab; 1 – 4 p.m.



FINET On-Line Courses

FINET System Navigation, FINET Overview, Employee Reimbursements, Purchasing and Disbursing, Cost Accounting, Revenues and Receivables, Internal Transactions, and Fixed Assets ([click on course name for description](#))

FINET Classroom Training Not Scheduled This Month

Budget Control, Grant Accounting, Project Accounting, FINET Inventory, and On-line Inquiries ([click on course name for description](#))

FINET Help Desk

Call 801-538-9690 to resolve immediate questions about using FINET.

Reservations

To reserve your spot in any class offered this month or to add your name to our waiting list for classes not offered this month, call 801-538-3082. We will notify you when the class is scheduled. If you make reservations and cannot attend, please notify us as soon as possible so we can make your spot available to someone else.



Persons with disabilities requiring accommodation should call 801-538-3082 a week before the class to request reasonable accommodation.

Read descriptions of all our courses and link to on-line courses at:
www.finance.utah.gov/training/courses.htm.